

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00  
ICAE-00 INRE-00 TRSE-00 MCT-01 /051 W  
-----081435 121159Z /64

O 120845Z MAY 78  
FM AMCONGEN NAPLES  
TO AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE  
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6040  
USDOCOSOUTH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NAPLES 862  
USDOCOSOUTH FOR INTAF  
E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, IT  
SUBJECT: MAY/JUNE ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS  
REF: ROME 8399

1. ALMOST ONE AND ONE-HALF MILLION VOTERS ARE BEING CALLED TO THE  
POLLS MAY 14 IN THE FOUR REGIONS OF THIS CONSULAR DISTRICT (480,000  
IN CAMPANIA, A LIKE NUMBER IN PUGLIA, SIGNIFICANTLY LESS IN CALABRIA  
AND A FEW THOUSAND IN BASILICATA). THESE ADMINISTRATIVE AND TOWN  
ELECTIONS HAVE TRADITIONALLY INVOLVED LOCAL ISSUES. THE ITALIAN POL-  
ITICAL/ECONOMIC CRISIS, ENTRY OF THE PCI INTO THE MAJORITY, DETERIOR-  
TION OF PUBLIC ORDER AND INCREASE IN TERRORISM CAPPED BY MORO KID-

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NAPPING ALL SERVED TO INCREASE THE NATIONAL VS LOCAL COMPONENTS OF  
THESE POLITICAL CONTESTS. THE MORO MURDER ENSURES THAT THEY WILL BE  
USED AS "LITMUS TEST" OF THE ELECTORATE MOOD. THE VALIDITY OF THIS  
TEST WILL HAVE TO BE ESTABLISHED IN THE MONTHS AHEAD.  
2. PRIOR TO THE MURDER, DC POLITICIANS EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE TO  
CONSULATE THAT THE PARTY WOULD IMPROVE ITS ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE,  
NOT NECESSARILY RELATING TO THE 1972 ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS BUT  
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CERTAINLY JUDGED BY JUNE 1976. PARTY OFFICIALS NOTED THAT THE DC  
RALLIES WERE VERY WELL ATTENDED AND CLAIMED THAT THE MORO CASE HAD  
RESULTED IN THE REACTIVATION OF THE PARTY AT THE NEIGHBOURHOOD LEVEL.  
3. THE DC HAS PORTRAYED ITSELF AS THE PRINCIPAL DEFENDER OF DEMOCRACY  
AND THE ITALIAN STATE. IT IS THE PRIME TARGET OF TERRORIST ATTACKS.  
THE DC, THEREFORE, ASKED THE ELECTORATE TO REJECT THE CHALLENGE TO  
DEMOCRACY AND TO PROVIDE A CLEAR SIGN OF SUPPORT. SOME DC POLITICIAN,

PROMINENT NAPLES LEADER ANTONIO GAVA BEING AN EXAMPLE, POINTED AT THE PCI (AND THE PSI) FOR PAST POLITICAL IRRESPONSIBILITY LEADING TO THE PRESENT CRISIS. THE FAILURE OF LEFTIST GIUNTAS IN RESOLVING LOCAL PROBLEMS HAS ALSO BEEN COMMONLY CITED.

4. THE PCI CAMPAIGN APPROACH INCLUDED SOME REFERENCE TO LOCAL ISSUES ALONG WITH LIBERAL USE OF MORO KIDNAPPING AND OTHER TERRORIST ACTS

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AS EVIDENCE OF THE NEED FOR GREATER UNITY AMONG THE POLITICAL FORCES. THE PCI PRESENTS ITSELF AS THE PARTY MOST COMMITTED TO PUBLIC ORDER AS DISTINGUISHED FROM THE PSI AND A DC WHICH IN PUGLIA WAVERED ON MORO NEGOTIATION.

5. THE SOCIALIST PARTY IN CAMPANIA TOWNS HAD ASKED VOTERS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE PARTY'S EFFORTS TO HELP SECURE MORO'S RELEASE. THE PRI ON THE OTHERHAND TERMED ITSELF AS THE FIRST PARTY TO RECOGNISE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL PUBLIC ORDER MEASURES.

6. MORO'S ASSASSINATION WITH ITS SHOCK-WAVE MAGNIFIED BY THE IMPACT OF WORLD FOCUS ON ITALY AND CEASELESS MEDIA COVERAGE SHOULD CALL FORTH GREATER DC SYMPATHY VOTE THAN MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED. LOCAL DC POLITICIANS FEEL THAT THE ADVANTAGE IS THEIRS. SOME REACT WITH A NOD TOWARD UNITY WHILE OTHERS PUBLICALLY SEEK BLAME FOR ROOTS OF TERRORISM AND FIND THE PCI GUILTY. IN FINAL ELECTION EVE RALLIES DC HERE CALLING UPON ELECTORATE TO VOTE THEIR PARTY BECAUSE ONLY WITH A STROG DC CAN THE COUNTRY MOVE INTO THE FUTURE WITH DEMOCRACY AND ORDER. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE YEARS OF TRANQUILITY ARE REMEMBERED. PCI IN TURN CALLS FOR UNITY BUT ZEROS IN ON THIRTY YEARS OF DC MISRULE AS TERROSISM ROOT CAUSE (NAPLES CITY COUNCIL SESSION COMMEMORATING MORO DISRUPTED ON MAY 10 AS PCI MEMBER LAUNCHED INTO ATTACK ON DC MISRULE).

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LOCAL PCI OFFICIALS SAID TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE DC SURGE FOLLOWING DEATH.

7. OTHER PARTIES MUST SENSE THE POSSIBILITY OF THEIR FUTURE DECLINE, ALTHOUGH MSI RALLIES WELL ATTENDED. THEY EXPRESS LIMITED HOPES.

8. IN SUM ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS IN THIS CONSULAR DISTRICT STILL CONCERN LOCAL PROBLEMS BUT NATIONAL ISSUES AND NOW THE MORO TRAGEDY HANG OVER THEM. BECAUSE OF THE ASSASSINATION'S EMOTIONAL AFTERMATH, ELECTORAL RESULTS MAY BE SOMEWHAT DISTORTED; THEREFORE, QUITE INACCURATE AS A GAUGE OF NATIONAL POLITICAL TRENDS. WHATEVER THOSE TRENDS, WE EXPECT THE GAUGE TO SHOW DC GAIN IN THE SOUTH, PRIMARILY AT THE EXPENSE OF THE LAY PARTIES BUT PERHAPS ALSO THE PCI. IT IS POSSIBLE, THAT THE DECLINE OF THE FAR RIGHT WILL BE TEMPORARILY ARRESTED IN SOME AREAS. COLANTONIO.

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